

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRAGUE 01575 161135Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION USNATO
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C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 1575

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CSCE, SHUM, CZ
SUBJECT: CHARTER 77 LEADERS CONFER
REF PRAGUE 1339

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PAGE 02 PRAGUE 01575 161135Z

1. SUMMARY: CHARTER 77 SPOKESMEN HEJDANEK, KUBISOVA AND
SABATA, ASSISTED BY RUDOLF SLANSKY AND OTHER CHARTER
ACTIVISTS, HELD A STRATEGY SESSION IN THE CZECH COUNTRYSIDE
JUNE 11, THEIR FIRST SUCH MEETING SINCE ARRESTS DURING BREZHNEV
VISIT(REFTEL). EMBOFF HAPPENED TO BE PRESENT AND WAS STRUCK BY
FACT THAT DESPITE RECENT TIGHTENING OF INTERNAL CONTROLS, THE
CHARTER ACTIVISTS APPEAR TO BE GETTING A SECOND WIND. NTQTBLY# THEY

PLAN TO ISSUE A DECLARATION MARKING THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF 1968.
THIS MESSAGE REPORTS HIGHLIGHTS DRAWN FROM A MORE DETAILED AIRGRAM
BEING POUCHED JUNE 16. AMBASSADOR BYRNE APPROVED AIRGRAM BEFORE
DEPARTING FOR LONDON COM MEETING AND HIGHLY RECOMMENDS ITS PERUSAL
BY THOSE INTERESTED IN CZECHOSLOVAK HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION.
END SUMMARY.

2. ARRESTS: ACCORDING TO THE SPOKESMEN, THREE PERSONS ARE STILL

IN DETENTION, OUT OF SIXTY OR MORE WHO WERE PICKED UP: WRITER
JIRI GRUSA, PAVEL ROUBAL, WHO DISTRIBUTED GRUSA'S WORK IN SAMIZDAT,
AND CATHOLIC PRIEST JAN SIMSA(IN BRNO). GRUSA AND ROUBAL, ARE
BEING CHARGED WITH INCITEMENT, WHICH CARRIES A SENTENCE OF FROM
SIX MONTHS TO THREE YEARS. CHARTER 77 IS PROTESTING ALL THE ARRESTS
IN A DOCUMENT NOW BEING CIRCULATED WHICH IN ADDITION STRONGLY
CRITICIZES PLATITUDES ABOUT DOMESTIC STABILITY AND ECONOMIC
SUCCESSES UTTERED DURING BREZHNEV VISIT.

3. ANNIVERSARY OF INVASION TO BE MARKED: THE CHARTER SPOKESMEN
REVERSED THEIR EARLIER DECISION NOT TO MARK THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF
THE AUGUST 1968 INVASION. DESPITE SOME OPPOSITION WITHIN THEIR
OWN RANKS, THEY DECIDED AT THE JUNE 11 GATHERING TO ISSUE A
CONDEMNATION OF THE INVASION AND CONTINUING OCCUPATION,
BASING THEIR ARGUMENT ON CSCE PRINCIPLES.

4. CHARTER ACTIVISM IN BRNO, EAST BOHEMIA: CHARTER SPOKESMAN
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PAGE 03 PRAGUE 01575 161135Z

SABATA SPOKE AT LENGTH WITH EMBOFF WHO BY CHANCE WAS SPENDING
WEEKEND AT FARMHOUSE WHERE MEETING TOOK PLACE. HE SAID THERE ARE NOW
SOME SEVENTY CHARTER SIGNERS IN BRNO, AMONG THEM A NUMBER OF PRIESTS.
IN TWO RURAL DISTRICTS WHICH CHARTER ORGANIZERS TOOK EMBOFF TO
VISIT, EVANGELICAL PREACHERS HAVE BEEN SPREADING CHARTER-RELATED
IDEAS FROM THEIR PULPITS.

5. GROUPINGS WITHIN CHARTER 77: ANOTHER ACTIVISTS TOLD EMBOFF
THAT TEN TO FIFTEEN PERCENT OF CHARTER SIGNERS, WHO NOW NUMBER
WELL OVER ONE THOUSAND, FALL INTO A GROUP HE DERISIVELY
CALLS "EURO-STALINIST." THEIR MAIN PREOCCUPATION IS TO RETURN TO
POWER, AND THEY OPPOSE ANY ACTION WHICH MIGHT ALIENATE THE USSR
OR EE ALLIES. THEY CONSTITUTE A KIND OF FIFTH COLUMN FOR TT
REGIME, WHICH DOES NOT HOUND THEM AS IT DOES OTHERS.

6. U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY: ASKED TO EVALUATE THE CARTER
ADMINISTRATION'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY, CHARTER 77 SPOKESMAN SABATA
SAID THE POLICY WAS AN EXCELLENT ONE WHICH SUITED CLIMATE OF THE
1970Z. THE SPOKESMEN AGREED UNANIMOUSLY THAT WHILE "OPTICALLY"
DISSIDENTS IN EASTERN EUROPE MIGHT SEEM WORSE OFF AS A RESULT
OF WESTERN ATTENTION, IN FACT THEY HAD SCORED SOME REAL GAINS,
WITH MORE IN PROSPECT.

7. ROLE OF VOA AND RFE: CHARTER ORGANIZERS HAD HIGH PRAISE FOR BOTH VOA AND RFE, WHICH THEY SAID ENABLED THEM TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH MANY MORE PEOPLE THAN THEY OTHERWISE COULD. IT IS THEIR IMPRESSION THAT THESE STATIONS HAVE MORE LISTENERS NOW THAN THEY USED TO, PERHAPS BECAUSE OF COVERAGE OF HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN EE AND THE USSR.

8. MORALE IMPROVED: CHARTER 77 SPOKESMEN WERE IN HIGH MORALE DESPITE, OR PERHAPS OF, THE RECENT WAVE OF INTERROGATIONS AND DETENTIONS. THOUGH INCREASINGLY PRESSED FINANCIALLY, THE ORGANIZERS ARE DETERMINED TO CONTINUE THEIR WORK. THEY REALIZE THAT A PERIOD OF SOME STAGNATION HAS SET IN FOR THE TIME BEING AND IMAGINE THAT BREZHNEV'S SUCCESSORS WILL SHOW A HARD LINE TO CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 PRAGUE 01575 161135Z

KEEP THE SOVIET EMPIRE IN LINE IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS DEATH, BUT HOPE THAT THEREAFTER THE POLITICAL CLIMATE MAY GRADUALLY IMPROVE.
FROWICK

NOTE BY OC/T: # AS RECEIVED.

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NNN

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